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FOR IP/EDA REBECCA WEBBER AND OES/ENV KERI HOLLAND

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SUBJECT: SLOVENIAN AGRICULTURE MINISTER TO ATTEND CSD-16
MEETING

REF: STATE 40180

¶1. (U) On April 21, Emboffs delivered reftel points to MFA International Development and Humanitarian Assistance Minister Plenipotentiary, Ales Verdir, who stated that although Slovenia appreciates U.S. concerns regarding a Zimbabwean chair of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), it will not follow the U.S. lead on the level of participation at the May 5 - 16 CSD meeting. Verdir noted that the EU shares U.S. concerns with the election process in Zimbabwe and stated that the GOS wants to encourage actions that will lead to a democratic end. However, he said that the EU is a strong supporter of the CSD, and the outcome of the CSD-16 is very important as it will form the basis for a resolution to be adopted at the CSD-17 next year. Therefore, the GOS plans to attend outreach activities at a high level and will be represented at the CSD-16 by the Slovenian Agriculture Minister, Iztok Jarc.

¶2. (U) Verdir added that CSD Chairman Francis Nhema had been elected in the National Assembly, that it was too early to make the call on his chairmanship, and that the CSD should not be a victim of the situation in Zimbabwe. Verdir believed other EU Member States would plan on sending representatives to the CSD-16 from the ministerial level as well, noting that the level of representation by EU members at the EU - Africa Summit in Lisbon last year had provided clear guidance on the appropriate level of participation.

COLEMAN